DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 287 169 CS 210 828

AUTHOR	Britton, James
TITLE	Writing and Reading in the Classroom. Technical Report No. 8.
INSTITUTION	Center for the Study of Writing, Berkeley, CA.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	CSW-TR-8
PUB DATE	Aug 87
NOTE	29p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Center for the Study of Writing, School of Education, University of California, Berkeley, CA 92720 ($3.00, plus sales tax for California residents; make check payable to Regents of U.C.).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Administrator Role; Classroom Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Integrated Curriculum; Letters (Correspondence); Reading Instruction; *Reading Writing Relationship; Student Attitudes; Student Writing Models; *Teacher Role; *Teacher Student Relationship; Teaching Methods; Theory Practice Relationship; Writing for Publication; Writing Improvement; *Writing Instruction; Writing Research; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Dialogue Journals; Student Journals; Writing to Learn

ABSTRACT

Noting that reading and writing should be interactive in the same way that listening and learning to speak are interactive, this report describes several teaching methods designed to integrate the teaching of reading and writing on elementary and secondary levels. The first section examines the use of dialogue journals in a third and fourth grade classroom, and argues that better writing and reading instruction occurs when student and teacher come to know one another through the journals. Subsections discuss (1) building a classroom environment that fosters reading and writing; (2) collaborative learning to produce a book written by students; (3) letter writing as an assignment for basic writers; (4) an assignment to create a tourist guide of San Francisco for teenagers; and (5) workshops to help students understand what writers do. The second section outlines features of effective classroom practices, such as verbal stimuli and flexibility to allow group or individual work. This section also examines the administrator role in such writing programs. The third section examines literature pertinent to the reading writing relationship, while the final section suggests ways in which teachers can bring about positive change in the way reading and writing are taught. (Three pages of references are included.) (JC)

ED287169

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Center for the Study of Writing

Technical Report No. 8

WRITING AND READING IN THE CLASSROOM

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August, 1987

University of California, Berkeley
Carnegie Mellon University

CS210828

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August, 1987

To appear in Writing and Reading: Collaboration in the Classroom. Anne Haas Dyson (Ed.) (In Progress)

University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

The project presented, or reported herein, was performed pursuant to a grant from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement/Department of Education (OERI/ED) for the Center for the Study of Writing. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the OERI/ED and no official endorsement by the OERI/ED should be inferred.

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WRITING AND READING IN THE CLASSROOM

by

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"The teaching should be organized in such a way that reading and writing are necessary for something." L.S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*

It is in the course of conversational exchanges that young children learn, little by little, both to listen to and interpret what people say to them, and, at the same time, to put into words their own messages. It would be a perverse regime that attempted to prevail on them to separate those two achievements--focusing on listening in one context and on speaking in another. Yet precisely that dissociation marks the prevailing methods by which schoolchildren today are taught to write and read.

This chapter will be concerned with the classroom as an environment for literacy and literacy learning. In it we shall explore ways in which teachers have improved upon the prevailing methods and developed strategies for encouraging children to learn to write-and-read; and we shall cite research findings that support these efforts and that may suggest further experimental classroom procedures. We look first at selected examples of work in the classroom.

WRITING-AND-READING--SOME EXAMPLES

Conversations on Paper

When teaching and learning are seen as genuinely interactive behaviours we discover that we cannot effectively teach *children we don't know*. Getting to know the children in a new group, say at the beginning of a year, is therefore a first priority. Of course, teachers and children get to know each other primarily in face-to-face situations and the talk these promote or permit. But days are short and classes may be large--and there is no doubt that a written exchange conducted in the right way can greatly assist us in getting to know the children we teach. Moreover--something we cannot underestimate--writing to this end is, for both child and teacher, writing-and-reading to a genuine social purpose.

The journal as "written conversation" between child and teacher was something I first appreciated in 1978 in Dundas School, Toronto. Dundas School is in an ethnic area of the city, part Chinese, part Greek. Under-achievement in these inner-city schools is a problem that the City of Toronto School Board has taken very seriously--and one to which they have applied positive, optimistic, and enlightened remedies, not the least of which is an agreed-by-consensus school policy for language and learning.

A Grade 3/Grade 4 class at Dundas in 1978 was taught by Mrs. Irwin, and one of the things the children did for her was to keep a journal, which she would read and write in as she moved around in the classroom. It was clear that journal entries were made only when you had something you wanted to say to Mrs. Irwin--and that made them interesting to read (both for her and for me as a visitor). I quote one or two of the entries made by Linda, a Chinese 9-year-old (the teacher's comments are shown in italics):

> Friday January 20th, 1978. After my rough copy of my project I am going to rerange my project around. I am going to put growing up first page. What monkeys do to eat in second page. Why do monkeys make faces page three.
> *Sounds interesting!*
>
> Wednesday Jan 25. It was interesting. Did you think it was very interesting or interesting or just a little interesting? Mrs. I., I'm sorry your husband wouldn't let you have another dog but anyways someone already took the dog. How's Malcolm? I hope he isn't sick or anything.
> *Malcolm is fine thank you--he cries when I leave in the morning and gets very excited when I come home!.....*
>
> Tuesday Feb 14th. The last time I wrote I told you that I was school sick and you asked me why. Well now I will tell you why, because I like to learn, I also like you, I like to do work and when I was away I miss the class. Today I am glad to be here because I wouldn't like to miss the Valentine party. Mrs. I. can you give me a few suggests for the party. What I mean is to give me a few suggests what to bring for the party. *(1)*
> *a sharp knife to cut apples (2) serviettes (3) little bags to take goodies home in.*
>
> Monday Feb 20th. Mrs. I., thankyou very much for the suggests for the Valentine party. I'm sorry you were away. What did you come up with?
> *I was very sick!*
>
> When you were away the class had other teachers. The first teacher's name was Mrs. G and the second teacher's name was Mr. M. They were both nice teachers. You know sometimes I wish you were my mother.
> *Lots of the time I wish I had a little girl like you!*
>
> Tues. Feb 21st. It's too bad I'm Chinese because if I was English you could adopt me.

As pedagogues I think we too easily lose sight of the realistic judgment that writing that does what we meant it to do must be good writing! Linda, like others in her class, enjoyed writing her journal because it made her feel good about the way "Mrs. I." felt about her. I talked to Linda about her journal and she said, "Yes, we kinda *communicate*!"

I think at this early stage in a writer/reader's progress the journal serves the straightforward purpose of establishing and maintaining relations between pupil and teacher. At later stages we shall demand a double purpose for the journal (as I have done in my courses for adults) and use it both to further interpersonal relationships and

to encourage relaxed exploration of the material of the course in the context of the writer's own experience. For either purpose, the teacher's response--even where it may be brief--is responsible for maintaining the tone, and thereby the purpose, of the exchange.

A movement to promote such uses of the journal has come in recent years from the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington. The journal, in essentially the terms in which I have described it above, has been christened the "Dialogue Journal." Stress has rightly been put on the importance of teacher and pupil *thinking together* in the written exchanges of the journal. Jana Staton describes the exchange in these terms:

> Dialogue journals are private, written conversations between students and the teacher on a daily, semi-weekly, or sometimes weekly basis.... Students are free to write about whatever concerns or topics *they* feel are most important. The writing is *functional*; that is, students and teachers write directly to each other, using language to get things done in an active way. Students ask questions, complain about lessons, describe what happened on the playground or at home, reflect on why things happen, express personal feelings, and even argue with the teacher about the fairness of assignments--in other words they think in written language. The teacher writes a direct personal response to the *content* of the student's writing, rather than commenting on its form or style, and also brings up new topics of interest.... The teacher's responses are natural elaborations and extensions of the students' thinking about issues and experiences.[1]

Staton goes on to quote a student who explains why she prefers the dialogue journal to worksheets: "The worksheets make you answer questions, but the dialogue journal makes *me* ask the questions, and then the teacher helps me think about possible answers."

Dialogue, a newsletter published by the Center for Applied Linguistics, reports a wide variety of situations to which dialogue journals have been applied--both for first language and second language learners, for "regular" and "basic" and "special" English or Language Arts classes. In a recent issue Roger Shuy reported on the value of dialogue journals in the early stages of learning to read:

> Dialogue writing is speech-like in nature. (It captures the natural phrasing children already use in understanding what others say.) It is closer by far to the actual talk of both participants than any of their writing in school contexts could be.

On such grounds he finds dialogue journal reading "more functional, more user-responsive, more developmentally adapted for comprehension than basal readers."[2]

The classroom reports that follow will include some variations of the use of journals (for example, "learning logs"): what seems to us essential is that the journal, in any form, should be regarded as an exchange between student and teacher (and available, when appropriate, for sharing with other students), but *not* as an unread student "confessional" nor any kind of expendable "pre-writing activity."

Free-write: Free-read

Since the topic of this chapter is one shared, within the limits of the elementary school, with a collection that owes allegiance to the University of New Hampshire (and to Donald Murray and Donald Graves in particular), it is not surprising that we share also much common concern, and that many examples of good practice, particularly at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 levels, could have served our purposes here. *Breaking Ground: Teachers Relate Reading and Writing in the Elementary School* is edited by Jane Hansen, Thomas Newkirk and Donald Graves and was published in 1985.[3] What is particularly noteworthy about the work is that various contributors share a belief that teaching approaches based on the successful experiences of children learning to write are able to create a classroom climate more favourable to learning to read. Indeed, such approaches create climates more favourable to learning in the curriculum as a whole than does the classroom climate currently typical in American schools. And it is two examples of these teaching approaches that we have chosen to present in this chapter.

The editors, in their preface, are explicit on this point:

> The philosophy behind writing process instruction is incompatible with the philosophy behind reading worksheets, tests, basals, and the fear that any deviation will endanger students' ability to learn to read. Too many students read fifty worksheets for every book they pick up. Their teachers teach what's next in the teachers' guide instead of what the students need next. Too many classrooms revolve around the teacher. But in writing classrooms, children say, "I wrote it. I do the work."
>
> Writing teachers give students choices and listen when the children talk about what they learn. They affirm what the students know and then learn from them. Writing led many of the teachers in this book to reexamine what they did when they taught reading.[4]

Carol Avery, a Grade 1 teacher in a Pennsylvania school, says of her six-and-a-half-year-old pupil, Lori:

> The first-grade experience for Lori and her classmates would not be a traditional one. The writing process approach has been used in the school district for two years. My experience with it had prompted me, with administrative encouragement, to abandon the commercial reading program used throughout the district and to develop a learning process classroom in which the children's writing would be the beginning impetus and primary instrument for their instruction in learning to read. Reading and writing would be allowed to flow and develop in an interactive process, each supporting and enhancing the other. I had watched the strong effect of writing process on children's reading in previous years and marveled. The two processes seemed to go together naturally.[5]

Carol Avery's account stresses the importance of allowing time, particularly in the early stages, and of creating a co-operative regime:

> We took our time--Lori, the class and I--to get to know and delight in each other. We built an accepting atmosphere. I modeled responses; the children

reflected genuine, encouraging comments toward one another and one another's writing. Slowly, carefully, we put together the nuts and bolts of our classroom procedures.[6]

Mid-term, the teacher recorded in her journal some sense of a changing role for herself:

> I feel a tension and a tremendous energy in these children working so hard at their reading. There is such an outpouring of effort and strength! At the same time I feel a vulnerability; this is really high-risk activity. I think I function best when I help maintain the atmosphere, remind them of all the strategies they could use and then step back. As I move among them, answering their questions and responding to their successes, I sometimes feel I'm an intruder. There's a danger that I might throw them off by asking them to deal with *my* priorities and I know that would be a mistake at this point. No schooling prepared me for the powerful unfolding that is taking place around me.[7]

And towards the end of the year she wrote:

> These kids are deeply involved with reading and writing.... They've formed a supportive, caring community! It's an environment that encourages risk, and risk-taking seems to be the key for them. To maximize their learning in this environment, I think it's important for me to keep my focus on the kids and to listen--really listen--to them. Then they can show where they are and what they need and I can respond in ways to continually nudge and stimulate their growth.[8]

In a later essay in this same collection, Nancie Atwell, a Grade 8 teacher, explains in detail how she worked with a group of colleagues to plan a writing course modeled on their own experience as writers and how, subsequently, she radically changed her strategies in teaching reading to bring them into line.

> In the end, the writing program we'd sought to develop was much bigger than a program. It's become a way of life. Writing workshop is perpetual--day in, year out --like breathing, but sometimes much, much harder. We're constantly gathering ideas for writing, planning writing, conferring, and seeing our writing get things done for us in our real worlds.
>
> A little over two years ago, I began to be aware of the contradictions between my beliefs about writing and my instruction in reading.... As a reader I usually decide what I'll read. But I get help--recommendations--from my husband and friends, with whom I talk a lot about books, and from reviews. I also draw on my prior experiences as a reader. I like John Updike's novels; chances are, I'm going to like *The Witches of Eastwick*. And I go back to books I've read, reentering and reconsidering the writing.
>
> Sometimes I engage in activities that involve reading and I can't decide what I'll read. For example, the text is required for the course; the application has to be correctly filled out; I want to serve an interesting, edible dinner. But nobody had better do anything so outright silly as to give me a vocabulary quiz, a comprehension test, or a chance to respond that's limited to the kind of questions found in teachers' guides or high school essay tests.

> I read a lot, at least a couple of books a week.... Some of my reading happens away from books. I think about character, plot twists, and turns of phrase. I playback lines of poetry. I suddenly see, in something that happens in my real world, what an author was getting at.[9]

And so, for Nancie Atwell, the reading program in her classroom "became much more than a program, more a way of life" --or rather part of the way of life already established through writing. Drawing inspiration from the Dialogue Journals described by Jana Staton, she initiated a letter exchange with the students about their reading. Gradually over time, she began to harvest comments on the reading that clearly reflected the students' experiences *as writers*. And at the same time stories, fictional and autobiographical, began to find a place in what the students wrote. Atwell documents the progress of two students throughout Grade 8: they offer us convincing evidence of the way they learned to *write-and-read* and the important role that literature played in that process.

It has been claimed[10]--rightly, we believe--that the experience of reading a work of fiction will tend to have the effect on a reader of making real life more "observable." The "pattern-forming" activity involved in responding to a work of fiction is sustained, perhaps, as a reader returns to contemplating his own situation. Similarly, a child who has been moved by a poem may well have taken up a kind of stance from which to write his own poem. This is very different, I think, from direct imitation or "modeling"; it is probably a transaction at a deeper level--the *effect of an effect*--one particular way in which writing and reading may be interrelated in the classroom.

Collaborative Learning

When talking, reading, and writing are orchestrated in the classroom in such a way that each can make its unique contribution to a single end, we have surely harnessed language to learning as powerfully as possible. Talk is then, as it were, the catalyst which ensures not only that the impact of reading upon writing shall be felt to the full, but also that there should be a feed-back effect of writing upon reading. (One of the interesting suggestions experts have made in recent years is to the effect that, just as listening to speech must rely upon the ability to produce speech, so the reading process "must somehow borrow the machinery of production.")[11]

While the length and complexity of classroom projects integrating language uses in this way will vary considerably, it is probably true that the long-term undertakings reap the maximum benefit. Lynda Chittenden, a Bay Area Writing Project teacher, had a class of nine- and ten-year-olds in Old Mill School, Mill Valley, California,[12] who spent many months producing a book on marine mammals--"a book for kids by kids." It illustrates many kinds of strength: in the first place, the uses of language are firmly grounded in a context of first-hand experience--the school is near enough to coasts from which migrating whales can be watched, and is in reach of a marine aquarium, an elephant-seal rookery and other appropriate sites for field trips. Then it was the teacher's policy to surround the undertaking with reading matter of many kinds--scientific, popular, fictional--and to encourage a variety of kinds of writing both as part of the final product and outside it: "The learning process is enhanced," she writes, "when kids are surrounded by the language of the unit they're studying: they need to be read good works of fiction and non-fiction that deal with the content; they need to be involved in animated discussions in which they ponder and exclaim over the wonder of the content." Then: "Puzzling, questioning, imagining, dreaming, pondering: these are all accepted

mental activities of learning. They are, however, an even more profound part of learning when kids regularly write in learning logs and reflect on the questions, confusions and fantasies that are included in active, involved learning."[13] She saw two purposes for the learning logs: primarily to encourage wide ranging contemplation and speculation, and secondly to provide an opportunity to marshal and organise newly acquired learning. "Listing and ordering new information," she says, "is necessary at many stages of learning. But I believe that real learning, the kind that changes our lives, comes more as a result of reflection and increased awareness. To me [this] kind of reflective writing...demonstrates an awareness and learning far beyond a mere acquisition of factual information."[14]

The students were organised into "chapter groups," co-operative groups in which each student took on a specific assignment, and the group continued to monitor suggestions and discuss first drafts. Where individual "ownership" of a unique contribution combines with a sense of cooperative achievement, the incentive to become involved is likely to be a powerful one.

The final stage in drafting came when individual writers took their sections to the teacher and with her worked out and recorded the definitive version. The published book, *Our Friends in the Waters*[15], contains two kinds of writing. The running text is the factual account of the topic, presented in such a way as to interest young readers, successfully avoiding the mode that Chittenden, in her postscript, calls "report"--"the traditional form for informational writing by kids, written in a dry, encyclopedia-copied language." Here for example are the closing paragraphs of the account, written by 11-year-old Steig:

> Only 5 species of great whales are fully protected: Blue, Humpback, Gray, Bowhead and Right Whales. However, even Bowheads are allowed to be killed by native Eskimo whalers. Just recently their allowed quota for Bowheads was raised. Some scientists feel that even though they are protected, there aren't enough Blue Whales left to recover and find each other in the sea and reproduce. The world should stop all hunting of marine animals or certain species will be totally exterminated.
>
> If the killing is stopped, the possibilities would be fantastic! We could learn so much about them. We could feed a Sperm Whale a fish with a homing device inside that could help us find out how deep this deepest diving whale can really go. We could find out how they are able to stay under water so long. We could even find out what they do all that time they're under water!
>
> But the greatest thing that could happen would be for us to be able to totally communicate with our brothers and sisters in the sea! Because Cetaceans have intelligence that has been compared to ours, they'd probably be the most interesting to talk to. A Blue Whale could tell us what it is like to be the biggest creature that ever lived! An Orca could tell us what it's like to be the top predator of the sea and not afraid of anything! A Gray Whale could tell us what they think of us sitting in little boats always watching them! A dolphin could teach us how to play their games!
>
> We could talk to them. We could tell them our dreams about them and ask them, "Do you ever dream about us?" "Do you ever wonder what we're like?"

But, all this will never be possible if all the whales are gone before we become friends.

As for the second kind of writing, Chittenden explains that it was her original intention to include in the book only the factual writing, but that she was so struck with the value of the learning logs and the kinds of writing they introduced that she used short extracts from them along with line drawings to embellish the margins of the text. Here, to conclude, are two such entries, the first by Jill, the second by Laura:

> I wish I was rich so I could go out on a boat and go right by one and touch it. Then get some scuba gear and swim with one. That's what I would like to do. I wish that I could go and hear them talk. I want to learn what they are saying. I want to know what they think. I want to be a whale. I want to swim like one and wave my flukes like one and to spout like one. Whales are beautiful.

> This weekend I've been wondering. You see we study whales and sometimes when we find something out, we're just so overwhelmed. So what I was wondering, if whales study us? Like if you're standing watching whales and a whale comes up to your boat. You usually think that the whale is there just for you to look at. But did you ever think that it was there to look at you?....When I was little I used to think that a whale was a whale and they were big and that's it.

Letters and Learning

A letter exchange between two people, sustained over a period of time in the absence of face-to-face contact, will clearly tend to bring the process of writing and the process of reading into a complex reciprocal relationship, a relationship that affects the writing behaviours and the reading behaviours of both participants.

How this may be applied to create a learning situation is dramatically illustrated in an account of Amanda Branscombe's[16] ninth grade classroom. The school she taught in was a high school in the Deep South of the United States. The school ran two tracks, one "general" for the average and above average students, the other "basic" for the special education students and low scorers. Branscombe's class was a basic class of 18 students, 14 black and 4 white.

She aimed to turn her class into a learning community in which students of diverse interests and abilities could find scope for their activities and in which they were encouraged to see themselves as writers and readers, able to use those powers both in school and in the community. She stressed writing and reading as complementary processes. She did not "teach" grammar or spelling, and she did not "red-pencil" their writings.

The course lasted a school year of nine months. In the first semester, students were asked to write a letter introducing themselves--describing who they were and what they were interested in--and on this basis they were paired with a grade 11/12 senior in a regular English class in the same school. The school was large, so there was little likelihood of the ninth graders ever meeting their opposite numbers. No attempt was made to bring them together, since the idea was that they should have to rely on a written exchange to develop, over a period of time, satisfactory communication based on

mutual understandings. There were no prescriptions as to topic, manner, or mode of approach. Each week a fifty-minute class session was allowed for the reading and discussing of letters received and the writing of replies.

One member of the class introduced herself as follows:

> My name is Cassandra. There's not much too say, except that I have a lot of ups and down's. I love to play sports, especially volley ball. I hope whoever reads this letter finds the personal Cassandra. We'll are your going to the game Friday. Well as for me, I'm not sure. My boyfriend wants me to go with him, but with things like they are now, I'm not sure what my next move is.... I would appreciate if you wouldn't inform me about this letter. But it's o.k. because most of this stuff is just in the head. Well so-long kid. And have a nice day. P.S.--Hope that you don't mind me saying kid.[17]

Several letters later her correspondent complained:

> Hello. I just discovered you haven't written me a letter this week. I guess I'll have to struggle through this without your letter of response... Although your letters never were much to begin with. I'm probably better off talking to myself because your always so *damn* confusing. May-be if you re-read or proof read your letters you might catch some of the strange things you've been saying.

To this Cassandra replied:

> But you and I are to different person's you know. And I've tried to explain myself as much as I could, but somewho you just don't get the message. What do you mean about my letters being confusing. I explain the things I write about the best I know how. Maybe they are confusing to you but I understand what I write. I don't think that it's confusing to you. I think that you just felt like getting me told a little.... We're still friends in my book, and if it's something you want to know I'll try and make myself clear. I hope that this is not so *damn confusing*. And if it is the Hell with the stuff.[18]

In fact, through these exchanges, which lasted one semester, ninth graders who had no previous opportunity in class of attempting continuous interpersonal written communication quite rapidly developed the ability to initiate topics, to respond to those raised in the letters they received, and, increasingly, to anticipate their readers' responses and their difficulties in responding, and to employ the conventional formats both of address (salutation and signing off) and of recapitulatory signals that, by their cross-referencing, bring coherence to written exposition.

In the article written jointly by Heath and Branscombe, this part of the course is commented on as follows:

> The increase in voluntary extended prose length, use of format features, idea initiations, types of conjunctions, and metalinguistic comments came not through teacher-directed revisions of the same pieces, but through "natural" needs that evolved as the ninth graders developed more topics on which they wanted to share information with the upperclassmen and as they became more

> inquisitive about how the upperclassmen felt about social issues and ideas.... Thus their development as writers came about for one of the primary reasons writing in the real world occurs: when direct face-to-face interaction or oral verbal communication by telephone is not possible.

The authors observe how this mode of learning parallels the procedures by which an infant acquires mastery of the spoken language:

> The students' maturity as writers developed in accord with situations similar to those of young children who want something, are misunderstood, and must use oral language to have their needs met.[19]

All this proved to be excellent preparation for the next phase of the course. The regular English eleventh/twelfth grade course came to an end and with it the paired letter exchanges. What took their place, surprisingly enough, was a corporate undertaking in liaison with a stranger the students had never met. Shirley Brice Heath, anthropologist of Stanford University, wrote letters to the class as a whole, enlisting their help in making and forwarding field notes that would contribute to an ethnographic study of their communities. Interpersonal communication was to some extent maintained in the letters students wrote to Heath, but the emphasis shifted in the direction of impersonal expository discourse:

> Branscombe saw the autobiographies, paragraphs, and letters to Heath as occasions to force the students to communicate to distant unknowing audiences the following types of information: 1) detailed explanations and assessments of past events, 2) descriptions of current scenes, actions and people, and 3) arguments defending their course of action, point of view, or interpretation.

That transition was not always easy. Although Heath's letters were photocopied so that each member of the class received one, some students were unhappy at the lack of personal, direct response to the questions they raised:

> Yet by the end of the term, they had learned to negotiate through oral discussion the meaning of the depersonalized and decontextualised passages of Heath's letters. Perhaps most important, they retained their questioning habits from their correspondence with the upperclassmen, continually asking Heath to explain herself, to clarify points, to add more information, and to relate points she made in her letters to points of information she or they had included in earlier letters.[20]

Branscombe organised class work that provided anthropological background, and she played a key role in the discussions aimed at interpreting Heath's letters and in the fine-honing of the drafts of field notes submitted to her. Heath's visit to the class, late in the year, provided one kind of culmination to the course, but threads of follow-up activity arising from the cooperation are still in existence.

Heath and Branscombe are of the firm opinion that this piece of teaching and learning is in sharp contrast to much that is traditional practice in American schools:

> We argue that previous schooling had in essence denied writing as a form of communication to these students; in many ways, this extended denial of a channel of communication by an institution is analogous to the severe and

extremely rare cases of parents who shut their children off from verbal and social interaction at birth and prevent them from learning to talk. However, the school's shutting off of written communication for students designated as not "intelligent" enough to write extended prose is an accepted event which occurs frequently.[21]

And they conclude their account by claiming that "the intelligence of a nation" depends upon communicator-audience relations, and that the one-time "special education" students in this ninth grade class were helped "to become 'intelligent' writers within such an audience community."[22]

"Real-World" Writing/Reading

Art Peterson, a participant in the Reading/Writing Planning Conference group that planned this chapter, teaches an advanced composition class, composed primarily of Asian students, at Lowell High School in San Francisco. Most of the students taking that class are studious and hard-working. In Peterson's opinion they tended to spend far too much time studying, so that when they expressed an interest in sharing information on "how to enjoy yourself in San Francisco," he encouraged them to produce a magazine under the title *The Best of Teenage San Francisco*.[23]

It is in any case his policy to stock his classroom with "real-world models of strong writing" covering a wide range of types and purposes--Baseball Almanacs, Harpers, examples of advertising, letters to the editor of the newspaper, stories, literature. They serve both as sources of inspiration and models for the students' own writing. It is part of his deliberate policy that students read aloud what they write and listen to fellow-students doing the same.

In the present instance he was also particularly concerned to correct what seemed to him to be a tendency on the students' part to express and maintain unsupported judgments. (Clearly, to describe one's prime sources of enjoyment in realistic terms constitutes a fair test.)

The Best of Teenage San Francisco provides for a wide range of interests, including:

The Best Sushi Bar A few years ago, teenagers were not particularly fond of raw fish. But, now all that has changed, and the search is on for the best sushi bar in San Francisco.

The Best place to get a New Look Glemby does not just style hair. They also do manicures and makeovers. Glass counters are stacked with lipsticks of more than thirty shades, blushers,...lipglosses, and an assortment of eyeshadows.

The Best Playground The Children's Playground, San Francisco's best playground, located near the edge of Golden Gate Park, attracts people of all ages. On any clear as a bell Sunday, chubby-faced pre-schoolers create their "mud-sculptures" while their grandparents lounge at the benches and reminisce about the last time the weather was "this good."

Best Library San Francisco State Library...is an ideal place to study and research; quiet, open until late hours, and full of six stories of wall to wall

books.... Just as any library, State has some librarians who are glad to help and some who make you feel like a dunce when you ask them to help. Use the library often enough and you'll be able to time your visits to coincide with the tyrant's day off.

Understanding What it is Writers Do

Writing workshops are a familiar enough phenomenon as freshman composition courses in American colleges and universities. They are in essence courses where student writing is drafted, read, discussed, and, where indicated, revised. The writing, reading and discussion are typically the work of small groups of students (which may sometimes include the teacher), while the teacher's primary responsibility lies in devising assignments that set the writing in motion and in monitoring the final evaluation of student performance.

Carl Klaus, of the University of Iowa, introduces a series of workshop courses (devised by members of the National Endowment for the Humanities/Iowa Writing Institute in 1979 and 80) in the following terms:

> The workshop is flexibly designed to allow for a variety of arrangements, so that student writing is sometimes examined by the class as a whole, sometimes in small groups, sometimes in pairs. The teacher sometimes guides class discussion, sometimes rotates among the small groups and pairs, at other times works one-on-one with individual students as they request. Responses to writing are sometimes conveyed entirely through discussion, sometimes entirely in writing, sometimes in a combination of forms. The process of responding is sometimes conducted according to highly structured guidelines, sometimes in a relatively open-ended way....And the material under discussion sometimes consists of notes and rough outlines, sometimes early drafts and sometimes finished pieces. As these variable arrangements suggest, the workshop is typically adapted to suit a variety of instructive purposes--all of which can be seen as contributing to the goal of writing and learning through experience.
>
> By virtue of repeatedly bringing students together to consider each other's writing, the workshop is intended to develop within the group a community of writers and learners.[24]

The 20 courses outlined in the chapters that follow vary greatly in the degree in which they involve the reading of texts *not* written by students, and in the nature of such texts. For our purposes here of illustrating good practice that relates writing to reading, I shall describe two courses that are differentiated in the kind of discourse they invite students to read and, hence, the kinds of writing they set out to promote.

The first is a course entitled "Literature and Exploratory Writing," devised by Karen Pelz for freshman composition classes at Dartmouth College. She explains that her intention was to "tap the faculty's interest and enthusiasm for literature, and at the same time create a course which would be a genuine freshman composition course, not just a course in which students wrote themes about literature." Her object was to give students experience in expressive discourse with opportunities for extension into various kinds of writing that grow out of it.

The focus of the course is certainly an "exploratory discourse":

> Rather than seeking to explain, analyze or persuade, its main aim is to allow writers to probe their own experience, to reflect upon it, and to experiment, with the intention of discovering and developing their own attitudes, beliefs, feelings and ideas about the experience, whether that experience be something they have done or witnessed in their own lives, a concept or an idea they have encountered, or a literary text they have read.[25]

Early assignments invite students to write about some "natural" area of the campus, as experienced at different times and under different circumstances: then to imagine that scene, before ever the college existed, as a wilderness in which they are to spend a summer. This imaginative projection is an approach to the first literary text presented, Thoreau's *Walden*. Thus:

> through language, through internal dialogue, through writing, students begin to explore the world of ideas, and the written expression of those ideas, by starting with what they know best--the world they have experienced and can continue to experience directly--and moving into the world of indirect experience through literature.[26]

The outline goes on to introduce a second literary text, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, which students explore by keeping "a reading journal, a collection of writing-in-progress."

Finally, with the help of the journal, students write on a topic raised by the novel in any way they like ("analytic, personal response, interpretive") and conclude the course by attempting a final assessment of what has been discovered, what it all means to them.

A brief account of the second course will illustrate the broad range of purposes and contexts covered in the Iowa Writing Institute collection. The texts that students are asked to read in Frank Hubbard's course are drawn from a variety of well known sources, for example the Pledge of Allegiance, the National Anthem, the Lord's Prayer.[27] They represent a focus on language itself: at one level a study of "automatic language"--ritual and formulaic discourse, cliches, set-pieces known by heart: but at a deeper level, a concern for the principles and practice of *design in language*.

His method is to invite students to encounter a stretch of discourse, to "re-experience it in writing" (e.g. by commenting, interpreting, paraphrasing, etc.), and finally to analyse the experience. By such metalinguistic activity he hopes to re-introduce meaning in taken-for-granted utterances, and thereby to promote the study of the *ways in which discourse conveys meaning*. He believes a course of this nature will equip students to tackle--on their own, by deliberate design--the production of unfamiliar and original forms of discourse.

His closing comment represents the course as a community undertaking and spells out what he hopes it will achieve:

> We tell each other not to accept any advice about writing that isn't rooted in positive response from an audience and developed out of activities each of us designs to suit himself or herself. So, the course at last depends on what the students bring and contribute. The content of the course becomes what we

> tell ourselves and one another as people and as writers.... I want students to formulate for themselves, in terms of experiences they have just had, what the course means, so that they can have similar experiences in the future and formulate again for themselves what the experiences signify; this procedure insures, I hope, that they will understand, rather than memorize before they are able to understand, what it is writers do.[28]

HALLMARKS OF GOOD PRACTICE

It seems reasonable at this stage to ask what common features characterise classroom practices we have judged to be *good*. Our answer, however, has to be guarded: in the first place, good practice must be responsive to a great range of variations in the nature of classroom communities and in their organisational contexts. It follows that what is good practice in one situation will not of necessity be good practice in another. Organisational contexts, moreover, will offer a range of constraints, some highly concrete and visible, others abstract, ambiguous perhaps, and difficult to identify. Practices that succumb in some degree to such pressures may nevertheless powerfully reflect good judgment in the features they salvage.

Our focuses will be upon teacher behaviour--upon actions and decisions over which the teacher has control. There may be aspects of good practice for which the responsibility lies elsewhere and we shall have to make this clear in our commentary.

First, as for the Teacher...

Priority must go to a proper conception of the teaching/learning relationship and its implications for the power structure of the classroom. It is our belief that a good teacher does not dominate the class but seeks to create an active, co-operative community, capable of taking initiatives, able to draw upon individual strengths, and contributing to the elimination of individual weaknesses. Rather than relying on the teacher as the middleman in all learning, group members expect to learn with each other and from each other. It is an important corollary here to recognise that the teacher is, first and foremost, a member of the group and is willing to that end to forego privileges that would promote him/her out of that status.

Such a regime recognises the principle that experience is a prime source of learning, but adds the notion that shared experience should enrich or extend the learning. (Attitudes, interests, intentions--the motive forces that get enterprises going--tend to be contagious.)

Notice that it is the teacher's initiative that establishes and sustains such a regime. This is achieved partly by reason of what the teacher *says* but becomes effective primarily by his or her example. Thus he/she is likely to try to cut down on teacher talk and make *listening* a major target. By the same token, however successful teachers may be in encouraging students to write for real purposes to real audiences, they are likely themselves to remain privileged first readers of what the students write.

Other behaviours teachers will forego will include *because I say so* justifications and the habit of asking questions to which they know the answers, and probably the habit of whipping up a little spurious enthusiasm by imposing a competitive framework upon learning activities.

We must stress that none of this should be taken as denying the fact that teachers have ultimately the responsibility of "managing" the class, that is to say, of ensuring conditions in which learning can take place. This responsibility, and the authority required to back it, constitute, in the regime as we have described it, an invisible pedagogy: the management role is something that underlies but is distinct from the teaching role: in good practice the teaching role takes over and the management role remains latent--a back-up potential.

This general view of the teaching/learning relationship has many specific applications to the handling of writing and reading in class. Because an individual's language so intimately reflects his or her identity, it is important that the classroom community should openly acknowledge ethnic, class, and cultural differences, encouraging an appreciation of language variety, a sense of the richness of the corporate group. Many of the examples we have quoted refer to the need to establish an "accepting" environment, one in which students feel secure enough to take risks.

This respect for cultural and other differences will involve the questioning of many traditional assumptions: our view of language norms, of accepted modes of perceiving the world, of behaviour rituals and routines needs to be tentative, open to complication and subdivision in the light of our experience of individuals and their communities.

If writing and reading are to be mastered by using them to achieve the users' own purposes, provision must be made for choice in what is written and what is read. Balancing the resulting diversity with the desirability of corporate undertakings becomes an important logistic, and curriculum decisions become a matter for negotiation.

The classroom needs to be rich in verbal stimuli--books (fiction and non-fiction, mainstream and ethnic), magazines, newspapers, printed ephemera, writings by students and teachers (in many languages, where this is appropriate), records, audio and video tapes, etc. And the classroom must be rich, too, in opportunities to use language in a variety of modes and functions--reflecting the developmental importance of expressive talk and writing.

Taking up a point that Carl Klaus has made[29], we would claim that both writing and reading are (a) profoundly personal and (b) profoundly social activities. Such activities will best be served by a flexible organisation that provides ample opportunities for individuals to work on their own or in pairs or in small groups but intersperses such sequences with whole group sessions, for example a coming together to watch a student presentation or hear a reading.

In this connection, we believe there is a special value--particularly but not exclusively at the earlier levels of schooling--in having the teacher read aloud to the class. The written language has its own rhythms and cadences, and having an inner sense of these becomes an essential resource to a writer.

We would put great stress on setting up a situation in which it is not only the students who write but also the teacher. Teaching and learning are not truly interactive if the teacher only plays from the sideline.

Classroom regimes that place great stress on grades or frequent testing have the effect of undermining the learning value of the class undertakings; they discourage the risk-taking necessary to discovery. Summative evaluation may well be part of a teacher's

responsibility, but it is better carried out as an operation distinct from teaching; this can be done by periodic assessment of accumulated performances. (It is only too easy for the classroom to degenerate into the only place in the world where *everything we do, we do in order to have someone else tell us how well we've done it!*) As a general principle, it seems to us desirable that we should keep our teaching role clear of our evaluating role--preferably by having students collect a portfolio of work over a period, and, at the close of the period, make their own selection (under guidance) of work on which to be assessed.

Writing and reading can only be intimately interrelated by floating both on a sea of talk; but to achieve this requires time and patience on the teacher's part, since traditionally we have shown that we don't value student talk.

Next, for Administrators and Others...

To itemise now the kinds of constraint that may affect what can be done in classrooms is in one sense to move from the *pros* to the *cons* of good practice. In doing so we shall be indicating some limitations upon what a teacher can achieve and pointing to action required of other agencies.

Timetabling can make or mar a classroom program. While in general there is greater freedom of action for a class that has longer rather than shorter time allocations, and while it might be argued that English and Language Arts teaching relies particularly heavily on the personality of the teacher, hence continuity of class with teacher is desirable (e.g. an elementary classroom teacher covering two or more grades within one group), the only really satisfactory solution lies in internal discussion and negotiation before timetable decisions are made.

If, as we have suggested, talk is the catalyst that relates reading to writing and both to first-hand and secondary experience, allowance must be made for active, animated, extended discussion. Where architectural inadequacies or authoritarian attitudes place too great a value on a quiet classroom, what a class can achieve may be severely restricted. We would point out, in this context, that we believe many teachers took their first steps towards an interactive view of teaching and learning, not via a writing workshop approach as did the teachers referred to above in the New Hampshire publication, but by testing out and discovering the learning potential of student talk. Easy access to tape-recorders made it possible for groups of teachers to *listen* to student talk when there was no teacher present and many of us were amazed at what the talk could sometimes achieve.[30]

Administrators need to recognise that, while objective and criterion-referenced tests can give us information about individual and group progress, the information they yield is partial only. Test results need to be supplemented by the holistic, experience-based judgments of teachers who have worked with the students. Where reliability is valued at the expense of validity, testing procedures deteriorate to the point where whatever can be reliably measured is worth measuring--a procedure that has been likened to pulling up a plant at frequent intervals to see how the root is developing. An authoritative report to the N.I.E. in 1975 from leading psychologists and linguists stated their view this way:

> If we could somehow convey the notion that diagnosis and teaching are inseparable, we might reduce the need for large-scale efforts in instrument

development and rely more on the intuition and sensitivity of experienced teachers to evaluate the preparation, competence, and needs of their students.[31]

That diagnosis and teaching are inseparable is something we accept without affecting our recommendation above that teaching and summative evaluation should be kept separate. Diagnosis is teachers' way of monitoring their own performance, deriving information for their own use. Summative evaluation is a response to the justified external demand for a progress report: it is information for the student, parents, other teachers and--on occasions--prospective employers or college admission agents.

Good practice has benefited a great deal in the past 50 years or so by what we have learned from observing and studying "natural learning processes." As a result, many of the features of good practice show marked differences from the practices of a generation or more ago--the period at which the parents of children now in our schools will have been educated. It seems to us to be an important part of a teacher's responsibility to keep the parents informed of new procedures and their rationale; at the same time, we must stress here the responsibility of administrators to assist in this process and the responsibility of parents to listen and be open to new potentials. In the final analysis, we recognise that some needed changes in classrooms can only be achieved when the community recognises and supports them.

There have been repeated references above, by teachers citing examples of good practice, to the need for an accepting environment, one that makes possible the risk-taking that is involved in genuine, exploratory learning. But teaching is also a high-risk undertaking and teachers themselves need to operate in an accepting environment. A system that initiates a regime of surveillance rather than a regime of trust may succeed in weeding out individual weak spots but will undermine by loss of morale the general level of teacher performance. Similarly, a school which as an institution operates a regime of surveillance will militate against the effectiveness of good practice in its classrooms.

If "instruction" is to remain a customary word to label the teacher's role in American education, its connotations will have to be considerably widened. We venture to quote here a claim made in the British Government Report on Reading and the Uses of Language in School (the "Bullock Report") since it bears particularly on the teaching/learning of English and Language Arts:

1. All genuine learning involves discovery, and it is as ridiculous to suppose that teaching begins and ends in "instruction" as it is to suppose that "learning by discovery" means leaving children to their own resources.

2. Language has a heuristic function; that is to say a child can learn by talking and writing as certainly as he can by listening and reading.

3. To exploit the process of discovery through language in all its uses is the surest means of enabling a child to master his mother tongue.[32]

RESEARCH AND THE CLASSROOM

A fuller account of relevant research having been given in earlier chapters, it is our concern here to refer briefly to studies that throw--or seem to throw--direct light on classroom procedures in the teaching of writing and reading. By way of introduction, we must report that there was disagreement within the planning group as to the value of research studies to classroom practitioners. Certainly, teachers are not in any position to wait upon research findings: as problems arise, they must act from intuition and experience to effect as good a solution as they can. In general, from intuition, experience, and the slow fruits of reflection, teachers know, better than they are able to perform; that is to say, more often than not, it is not lack of knowledge but lack of opportunity to put that knowledge into practice that rules out or restricts good practice. On the other hand, it can hardly be denied that educational practice has, over the years, benefited widely from the thinking that has contributed to and resulted from research.

To set the scene for the studies we shall describe, we could not do better than refer to an analysis, based on observations, carried out by the Russian psychologist, L.S. Vygotsky, more than 50 years ago. It is described in the last chapter of a posthumous publication, prepared by four American editors, entitled *Mind in Society*.[33] The chapter itself is called "The Prehistory of Written Language." Vygotsky introduces it by claiming that teachers have made the mistake of focusing upon, on the one hand, the motor skills needed to learn to read and, on the other, the motor skills needed to learn to write. Psychologists, moreover, have followed suit, so that both theorists and practitioners have "paid remarkably little attention to the question of written language as such, that is, a particular system of symbols and signs whose mastery heralds a critical turning point in the entire cultural development of the child."[34] Vygotsky traces contributory developments towards mastery of written language in the child's use of gesture, his drawing, his make-believe play (and the role that speech plays in these activities). He concludes that, rather than receiving reading and writing "at the hands of the teacher," the child should master the written language through and by means of his own activities, primarily his play. Hence the statement with which we opened this chapter, "The teaching should be organized in such a way that reading and writing are necessary for something."

I think we may learn from Vygotsky that the development of *writing-cum-reading* will be a complex, many-faceted, often discontinuous progress, rooted in early drawing and play activity, and that in the process of discovering that they "can draw not only objects but also speech," children are likely to move through a topographical stage (where the position of marks on a page carries meaning) to a pictographic stage (where for example an 0-shape may represent an egg) and thence to the stage of conventional signs.[35] It is worth noting that in a number of schools, with such conclusions from Vygotsky in mind, kindergarten teachers have provided, with every sheet of drawing paper, smaller, perhaps colored, sheets for writing on: by establishing this procedure they are able to study the initial stages children move through as they accompany their drawings with a parallel activity they conceive of as "writing."

In a masterly review of research on written composition Scardamalia and Bereiter[36] turn aside briefly to suggest that Vygotsky's notion of "internalization" could profitably be investigated in the context of the forms of "facilitation" by which teachers attempt to influence the composing behaviours of students, including conferencing:

> On first thought, conferencing would seem to be well designed for internalization: the thinking, carried out jointly at first, comes in time to be carried out in the mind of the student. But the form of the conference is dialogue, and there is no

> indication from research to suggest that the mature composing process has the form of an internal dialogue.... Serious research is needed to determine what students internalize from what teachers have helped or induced them to do.[37]

We might point out here that, though evidence does not suggest that adults operate an internalised dialogue, there is certainly evidence that young children talk to themselves, and sometimes to other people, in the course of composing.

In this context Scardamalia and Bereiter take up the question of the value of expressive writing:

> Although data collected with a view to external validity are close to nonexistent, there seems little reason to doubt the abundance of case material indicating that, given a reasonably supportive context, most children will take readily to opportunities for expressive writing. There thus seems to be substantial merit in the current enthusiasm for expressive activity approaches to writing, especially as regards developing written language fluency and a sense of the personal satisfactions that can come from writing.[38]

They go on, however, to point out certain limitations: for example, because of the limited nature of the demands made on a writer in producing expressive writing, it may prove to be a means of fostering only relatively simple kinds or/levels of composing. This would indicate that it should be regarded as a bridge, a transitional stage towards more developed forms of discourse (a recommendation that is certainly in line with examples of good practice we have quoted earlier). Further, since in current active approaches to writing the teacher is regarded as collaborator rather than as expert instructor, the degree to which a learner profits eventually from this collaboration must depend to some extent upon his/her success in internalising the teacher's contribution.

Clearly a fuller understanding of internalisation would also throw light on the relationship of writing to reading, perhaps in a variety of ways. Scardamalia and Bereiter report the existence of two kinds of cognitive study along these lines: research into the effects of various literary devices on readers, and research on the effects of literary models upon students' writing.[39] The problem of providing operational definitions of literary devices (as distinct from existing literary-critical characterisations) has tended to hold up progress in the former type of study, and systematic enquiries of the second type are at an early stage and seem so far to have yielded little that was not already obvious. The classroom will certainly be the appropriate setting for further researches of both kinds.

There is one problem on which we have long thought grassroots evidence from the classroom was urgently needed: that is the question as to how far implicit rule systems supplement and how far they may substitute for explicit knowledge of rules. Theorists, it seems, offer conflicting and confusing views on this point.

In comparing inexperienced with expert writers, Scardamalia and Paris[40] suggest that, whereas all writers use implicit knowledge of text features, adults use also explicit knowledge of such features (e.g. "argument," "introduction," "example") in the course of composing. Their experiments showed that Grade 4 and Grade 6 schoolchildren *could be taught* to use such explicit knowledge, ***but its use made their writing less and not more coherent.***

The means by which learners acquire knowledge of genre is a key issue in this connection. In a carefully controlled observation of the reading and writing

performances of Grades 3, 6, and 9 children, Langer[41] found that, while stories and reports are firmly differentiated by the third grade, knowledge and control of story form is well in advance of that of report form: report writing undergoes dramatic change between Grades 6 and 9. Langer suggests that the source of children's knowledge of genre as it is revealed both in their reading and their writing lies in the "*functional forms they hear and use in their daily lives*"--knowledge which we must therefore presume is likely to be predominately implicit rather than explicit.

Such a conclusion is borne out by Freedman, Carey and Miller's study of six students who, although not regular law students, were taking a law course at Carleton University and thus acquiring a genre of academic discourse new to them.[42] This, the researchers found, is how they did it:

1. The learners approach the task with a "dimly felt sense" of the new genre they are attempting.

2. They begin composing by focusing on the specific content to be embodied in this genre.

3. In the course of the composing, the "dimly felt sense" of the genre is both formulated and modified as (a) this "sense," (b) the composing processes, and (c) the unfolding text interrelate and modify each other.

4. On the basis of the external feedback (the grade assigned), the learners either confirm or modify their map of the genre.[43]

The authors stress that it is the purposeful addressing of the question set by the assignment that plays a vital part in the interaction by which the genre is constructed: compare Langer's reference above to rhetorical forms as *functional*.

Perhaps this is a process John Dewey can help us to understand: in *Democracy and Education* he wrote:

> For the person approaching a subject, the simple thing is his purpose--the use he desires to make of material, tool or technical process, no matter how complicated the process of execution may be. The unity of the purpose, with the concentration upon details which it entails, confers simplicity upon the elements which have to be reckoned with in the course of the action. It furnishes each with a single meaning according to its service in carrying on the whole enterprise.[44]

A growing knowledge and understanding of how writing relates to reading and how both are founded upon development of spoken language has been the outcome of psychological, sociological and linguistic studies over recent years. Yet, more recently, we have been sharply reminded that such studies are based principally upon observations of mainstream, middle-class families and that the picture needs to be considerably complicated if it is to do justice to the situation within our multicultural schools and societies. A major contribution in this field--and one that is gaining increasing recognition--is the work of Shirley Brice Heath, notably her book *Ways with Words*.[45] Her ethnographic study of three communities living in neighboring areas of Carolina raises the problem of the gap between the linguistic expectations, demands and assumptions of the average elementary school, and the language habits and attitudes of many of the children who go there: a gap, moreover, that, under present educational circumstances, will widen with the years.

We cannot leave the subject of research without remarking that if the current concern with the role of teacher/researcher makes the kind of headway it promises in the United States, there can hardly be a more suitable field for such classroom enquiries than the topic of this present chapter.

TEACHERS AND CHANGE

There are educational practitioners and theorists who have operated long enough in the recognition that teaching and learning are interactive behaviours to have become aware that any agency outside the classroom can influence learning outcomes only as its demands are mediated by and represented in the teacher's behaviour. Such a realisation is derived from an increasing sensitivity to the nature of individual learning patterns, the role of intentionality in learning, and the importance of the classroom community as a source of knowledge and understanding. These are insights not yet widely accepted, and there are researchers who still speak of "teacher-proof kits" and administrators who still look for outcomes predictable in terms of measured behaviours. (In contrast, the best teachers, we believe, secure rich outcomes by the initial and progressive planning of *input*, in the light of their knowledge of the subject, their experience of the world, and their familiarity with the needs and interests of the particular students they teach. This is planning, moreover, that allows for choice and negotiation on the part of those students.)

Our concern here is to claim that our target audience for the kind of thing we have been saying about good practice, about integration in the teaching of writing and reading, will be primarily the classroom teacher. Schools and educational systems tend to be slow to change, but, when they do initiate deliberate change, it is usually by a kind of movement that spreads from teacher to teacher.

We shall be addressing teachers of all subjects, not only English and Language Arts teachers. A movement that began in England with a group of London teachers in the late sixties has become worldwide, still under the title they gave it, "language across the curriculum." The lively presence of that movement on the American continent provides us with an audience already sympathetic to the kinds of insights that lie behind the good practice we have described. For teachers of the elementary grades, the Language across the Curriculum campaign indicates little more than the need to co-ordinate teaching and learning strategies concerning language throughout a school staff, since the classroom teacher is already responsible for whatever is achieved by writing and reading in all subject areas. At the secondary school level, however, the campaign must try to recruit the concern of teachers of varied interests, many of whom are inclined to feel that language is the concern of the English department and nobody else. Our approach must indicate that what is at issue is the quality of learning achieved by students in the subject they teach, and it must suggest that what is needed is an agreed policy for language in the school: a document prepared by staff in consultation that shall be at one and the same time the agenda for further periodical staff discussion and an instrument of agreed policy for action.

This is a procedure that can't be rushed: English and Language Arts teachers are likely to be called on to initiate action, but will need to do so with tact and caution. Experience suggests that the best plan is to begin in a small way, working with a few allies and attempting to extend the circle gradually.

We see our appeal to classroom teachers as part of a process of *professionalisation*, a move towards equipping teachers to manage more completely their educational function in society, and in doing so to earn the confidence of the community they serve and the professional status that goes with that responsibility. As such, we look to the National Writing Project as a model of the appropriate disseminating procedures--procedures that draw fully upon the resources participants bring with them and at the same time provide a genuine learning experience in the context of a supportive group.

Laury Fischer, another member of the Reading/Writing Planning Conference group that planned this chapter and a teacher at Washington High School, Fremont, California, stressed these issues in his comments to the group. He pointed out the importance of consultation among teachers--opportunities to observe each other in action and to discuss the whys and wherefores of particular practices. Grants may be used to provide time in the school day for such procedures. Without opportunities of this kind, teachers new to the task are above all likely to model their teaching on the practices of traditional, established, senior colleagues. Change, in such a context, comes hard: new insights and understandings have to fight for acceptance into practice. Fischer thus sees teacher education, properly handled, as a major opportunity to break through this resistance.

Looking at the present state of affairs from the point of view of strategies for change, it seems to us that what is above all lacking is administrative support for the innovations that classroom teachers are ready to attempt. For this reason we would put a high priority on the need to provide professional development opportunities for principals and other administrators. It is no denial of anything we have said about the primary role of classroom teachers to add now that many initiatives are likely to come to nothing for lack of encouragement and support at the right moment from administrators. We believe this lack is as likely to be due to failure to understand what is at issue as it is to result from a lack of concern. After all, teachers are in the classrooms, where first-order problems arise and must be dealt with, and this is a learning experience denied to administrators.

There is, we believe, a complementary need for support in a variety of ways from universities. Degree structures are not always adaptable to the kinds of professional development of teachers most in demand; and where suitable courses are provided, the staff concerned may receive scant recognition, either professional or financial. Again, university teaching styles deemed appropriate for a typical student population will often reflect an undervaluing of the experiences the school-teachers themselves can contribute to the course. (As we have suggested--it is in their classrooms that the problems arise and are dealt with: where the practitioner's wisdom and experience can interact with the specialist's expertise, learning and teaching may genuinely become a two-way affair.)

But finally, when in England the Bullock Report was published, with its firm recommendations for change, a teacher wrote to the *Daily Telegraph* to say that "failure to implement the Bullock Report was built into the timetable." That was in 1975, and the years since then have proven her right. The professionalisation of the teacher, which prospered in our countries during the period of post-world-war expansion and right through the sixties, has suffered a sharp decline since that time. If last words carry solemn and portentous messages, our last words shall be a plea for the provision of more time for staff consultation within the school day. We believe that only in this way can the potential for change that we have been concerned with be brought to fruition.

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